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ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Department of Inductive Biblical Studies

NT(IBS)637
Fall, 2002

Pauline Epistles

Bauer

I. General Description

A study of Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians which builds on the methodology of the first inductive Bible study course by further use of what has been previously learned and by emphasizing the study of books as wholes. Accordingly, there is a special focus on the initial survey of books as wholes, the interpretation of parts of books in the context of the book as a whole, and the synthesis of books. In addition, attention is given to thinking, valuing, and living biblically by learning how to apply Scripture to life and ministry. This course seeks intentionally to incorporate the grammatical analysis of the Greek language into the overall inductive process

II. Course Objectives

- A. Methodology. The emphasis will be upon the observation and interpretation of books as wholes. By the end of the course, the student should be able to do the following:
1. Employ structural observations for the interpretation of individual passages within the book, as well as for the interpretation of the book as a whole.
 2. Raise various kinds of interpretive questions, and answer these questions, based on the use of exegetical determinants;
 3. Employ various kinds of relevant evidence, including that which involves exegetical use of the original languages, in a process of inferential reasoning for the interpretation of individual passages within the book, as well as for the book as a whole.
 4. Synthesize the interpretation of units of various lengths, such as the paragraph, the segment, the section (division), and the book as a whole;
 5. Use aspects of methodology that are especially relevant for epistolary material;
 6. Evaluate and apply truths that emerge from the interpretation of the material.
 7. Articulate the major issues involved in the movement from text to proclamation; move from the interpretation and application of the text towards its proclamation; and integrate the interpretation and application of a passage in the Pauline Epistles with that of a correlative passage from the Old Testament so as to move toward a sermon (or teaching lesson) based on both an Old Testament and New Testament text.
- B. Content. The student should be able to do the following:
1. Think through the contents of each book of these Pauline Epistles without recourse to the printed text;
 2. Identify significant passages in these Pauline Epistles and interpret them contextually;
 3. Demonstrate the importance of a sound methodology for interpretation, including specific examples from these Pauline Epistles;
 4. Describe thoroughly the meaning and development of major themes in these Pauline Epistles, citing individual passages and other specific data to support conclusions;
 5. Discuss the historical and religious background of these Pauline Epistles, demonstrating a general knowledge of critical problems regarding the Pauline Epistles and an ability to use these data in the interpretation of these Pauline Epistles.
- C. Attitude. The student should:
1. Appreciate the value of sound methodology for the interpretation of the biblical materials, resulting in a desire to apply the inductive method to other biblical books;

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2. Desire to make the Pauline Epistles the object of intensive and creative study throughout life;
3. Intend to employ seriously the Pauline Epistle in preaching and teaching within the context of the church.

III. Course Texts:

A. Required Texts:

1. Revised Standard Version of the Bible, or New Revised Standard Version of the Bible
2. The Greek New Testament (or Interlinear Greek-English New Testament)
3. Biblical Resources for Ministry, by David R. Bauer
4. It's Still Greek to Me, by David A. Black
5. A Dictionary of Paul and His Letters, edited by Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid.

B. Collateral Texts:

1. Syntax of New Testament Greek, by Brooks and Winberry
2. Methodical Bible Study, by Robert A. Traina

IV. Course Requirements:

- A. The completion of the following lessons in writing, unless otherwise indicated by the instructor. All lessons are to be handed in at the end of the class period on the day designated. No late papers will be accepted save in cases in which permission is granted by the instructor based on emergency.
- B. Punctual attendance at all class sessions. Because of the importance of class attendance, and because of government regulations regarding student loans, a record of attendance will be taken at each class session. Absence at more than three class sessions will result in grade penalty, and absence at more than four will result in loss of credit for the course. Exceptions may be granted based on emergency, in consultation with the instructor.
- C. A careful reading of the assigned portions of the required texts.
- D. Listening to the tape of an expository sermon on a passage from the Pauline Epistles with a view toward using that sermon as a catalyst for class discussion on moving from text to proclamation.

V. Course Evaluation:

Assignments will be 100% of the grade.

VI. Course Assignments:

Lesson 1. Survey of the Book of Galatians. (Survey of Book as a Whole)

1. Identify the general and specific materials of the book.
2. Locate the main divisions and sub-divisions of the book, and identify the major structural relationships operative in the book as a whole.
3. Ask a few interpretive questions of each major structural relationship observed.
4. Identify the key verses and strategic areas that provide insight into the book as a whole.
5. Locate data that bears on such higher critical issues as the writer, place and date of writing, etc.
6. Note other major impressions that relate to the book as a whole.
- 7.

Lesson 2. Survey of Galatians 1:6-2:21. (Survey of Segment as a Whole)

1. Identify the specific materials of the segment by giving a brief title to each paragraph.
2. Locate the main units and sub-units in the segment, and identify the major structural relationships operative in the segment as a whole.
3. Ask a few interpretive questions of each major structural relationship identified.
4. Identify the key verses and strategic areas that provide insight into the segment as a whole.

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5. Identify the literary form(s) employed in the segment.
6. Note other major impressions that relate to the segment as a whole.

Lesson 3. Detailed Observation of Galatians 2:18-21.

Do a detailed observation of these verses. In the process, identify two or three of the most promising questions.

Lesson 4. Interpretation of Galatians 2:20.

Interpret Galatians 2:20 by answering the following question: What is meant by “I have been crucified with Christ?”

Lesson 5. Galatians 3:1-4:31

1. Survey. Survey this segment, following the suggestions under Lesson 2.
2. Detailed Analysis. Using the main units and sub-units identified in your survey as a general framework, carefully trace the thought of this material.
3. Analytical Interpretation. Interpret this segment (or a significant portion of it) by answering a question(s) derived from one or more structural relationships, major issues, or strategic areas identified in your survey, or on the basis of your detailed analysis. Carefully and explicitly form your question(s) and interpret the segment by answering that question(s).
4. Synthesis Interpretation.
What are the major problems Paul addresses here? How are these problems related? How does he address each? What are the major theological claims here? What is the meaning of each? How does this segment contribute to Paul’s argument in the book as a whole?
5. Application and Proclamation.
 - a. On the basis of your interpretation under nos. 3 and 4 above, explore specific ways in which this segment can be applied to yourself and/or other contemporary persons.
 - b. Develop a proclamation outline. A proclamation outline is not synonymous with a sermon outline (which assumes homiletical crafting), but is rather the statement of a specific proclamatory thesis, with three to five main points that develop that overall proclamatory thesis (and are clearly and explicitly related to each other). Each of these main points should themselves be developed in a brief but specific paragraph, which describes the (theological) teaching derived from the interpretation of the text, the contemporary appropriation derived from the application process, and the connection between the two.

Lesson 6. Galatians 5:1-6:10.

1. Survey this segment, following the suggestions under Lesson 2.
2. Develop a study of this segment following the instructions under Lesson 5 above.

Lesson 7. Synthesis of the Book of Galatians.

Describe in a holistic, integrative, and comprehensive fashion the concept of the Christian liberty as presented in this book, including such things as specific characteristics, problems, motivations, resources, and the theological foundation for proper Christian liberty and challenges. Be careful to give evidence for all assertions (including verse references).

Lesson 8. Survey of the Book of Philippians

Survey this book, following the suggestions under Lesson 1.

Lesson 9. Philippians 1:3-26

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1. Survey this segment, following the suggestions under Lesson 2.
2. Develop a study of this segment following the instructions under Lesson 5 above.

Lesson 10. Philippians 1:27-2:30.

1. Survey this segment, following the suggestions under Lesson 2.
2. Develop a study of this segment following the instructions under Lesson 5 above.

Lesson 11. Philippians 3:1-4:20.

1. Survey this segment, following the suggestions under Lesson 2.
2. Develop a study of this segment following the instructions under Lesson 5 above.

Lesson 12. Synthesis of the Book of Philippians.

Describe in a holistic, integrative, and comprehensive fashion the concepts of Christian joy as presented in this book, including such things as specific characteristics, problems, challenges, motivations, resources, results and the theological foundation for Christian joy. (In the process, note especially the role of imitation.) Be careful to give evidence for all assertions (including verse references).

Lesson 13. Survey of the Book of Ephesians.

Survey this book, following the suggestions under Lesson 1.

Lesson 14. Ephesians 1:3-23.

1. Survey this segment, following the suggestions under Lesson 2.
2. Develop a study of this segment following the instructions under Lesson 5 above.

Lesson 15. Ephesians 2:1-3:21.

1. Survey this segment, following the suggestions under Lesson 2.
2. Develop a study of this segment following the instructions under Lesson 5 above.

Lesson 16. Ephesians 4:1-16.

1. Survey this segment, following the suggestions under Lesson 2.
2. Develop a study of this segment following the instructions under Lesson 5 above.

Lesson 17. Ephesians 4:17-5:20.

1. Survey this segment, following the suggestions under Lesson 2.
2. Develop a study of this segment following the instructions under Lesson 5 above.

Lesson 18. Ephesians 5:21-6:9.

1. Survey this segment, following the suggestions under Lesson 2.
2. Develop a study of this segment following the instructions under Lesson 5 above.

Lesson 19. Ephesians 6:10-20.

1. Survey this segment, following the suggestions under Lesson 2.
2. Develop a study of this segment following the instructions under Lesson 5 above.

Lesson 20. Synthesis of the Book of Ephesians .

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Synthesize the Book of Ephesians answering these questions: What are the major aspects of the Christian life, according to this book? What is the specific meaning of each and how are they related to one another and inform one another? What is the christology and ecclesiology of this book and how are they related?

Lesson 21. Survey of the Book of Colossians.

Survey this book, following the suggestions under Lesson 1.

Lesson 22. Colossians 1:3-14.

1. Survey this segment, following the suggestions under Lesson 2.
2. Develop a study of this segment following the instructions under Lesson 5 above.

Lesson 23. Colossians 1:15-2:5.

1. Survey this segment, following the suggestions under Lesson 2.
2. Develop a study of this segment following the instructions under Lesson 5 above.

Lesson 24. Colossians 2:6-23.

1. Survey this segment, following the suggestions under Lesson 2.
2. Develop a study of this segment following the instructions under Lesson 5 above.

Lesson 25. Colossians 3:1-17.

1. Survey this segment, following the suggestions under Lesson 2.
2. Develop a study of this segment following the instructions under Lesson 5 above.

Lesson 26. Colossians 3:18-4:1.

1. Survey this segment, following the suggestions under Lesson 2.
2. Develop a study of this segment following the instructions under Lesson 5 above.

Lesson 27. Synthesis of the Book of Colossians.

Describe in a holistic, integrative, and comprehensive fashion the portrait of the Christian life as presented in this book, including such things as specific characteristics, problems, challenges, motivations, resources, and the theological foundation for proper Christian behavior and existence. Describe also the christology and cosmology of this book, and their relation to each other. Note points of continuity and discontinuity between Colossians and Ephesians in the areas of the Christian life and christology.

VII. SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

PAUL

*Beker, J. Christiaan. Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980. 452 pp.

A groundbreaking work that has significantly influenced all subsequent studies of Pauline theology. Attempts to identify the basis of coherence of Paul's thought, and to explore how Paul has applied his theology to those in the churches under his care. Argues that the unifying theme of Paul's gospel is the apocalyptic concept of the triumph of God, i.e., "the hope in the dawning Christ." In addition, claims that Paul adopted a hermeneutic that enable him to apply this coherent theme to persons in a variety of conditions and circumstances (the "contingent particularities of the human situation"). Offers a learned, illuminating, and (in the judgement of many scholars) largely compelling portrait of the shape of Paul's thought.

*Bruce, F. F. Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977. 491 pp.

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Most comprehensive and informed account of Paul's life from conservative evangelical perspective. Written in lucid style primarily for pastors and theological students, it nonetheless contains discussions that are of interest to the scholar. Considers evidence from Paul's undisputed letters to be primary, but has high regard for the historicity of Luke's presentation of Paul in Acts, and takes the latter to be strong secondary evidence. Deals with aspects of Paul's theology as it emerges from his portrait of Paul's life.

*Dunn, James D. G. The Theology of Paul the Apostle. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977. 491 pp.

This prolific Pauline scholar presents the most complete and comprehensive theology of Paul since Ridderbos, adopting recent insights Sanders (described below) and Beker (described above). Offers lucid treatment of major themes, e.g. God, humankind, sin, Christian life (including ethics), using Romans as primary basis and expanding upon each theme with material from the other letters. Includes helpful discussion on methodological issues involved in developing a Pauline theology. Emphasizes dynamic character of Paul's thought and necessity to treat not only what Paul explicitly wrote but also Jewish and early Christian presuppositions of his thought, the role of transformative moments in Paul's life, and deeper issues involved in the situations Paul's letters attempt to address. This holistic approach gives breadth and depth to D's presentation.

*Hawthorne, Gerald F.; Martin, Ralph P.; and Reid, Daniel G., eds. Dictionary of Paul and His letters: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993. 1038 pp.

Pauline theology, literature, background, and scholarship. Contributors are prominent evangelical scholars from North America, Europe, Australia, and Asia. Clearly written, intended primarily for theological students and those engaged in preaching and teaching in the Church, but authoritative, in-depth articles contribute to scholarly discussion in the guild. Articles pertain to Paul and all things associated with him, including theological themes (e.g. law, gifts of the Spirit); theological issues (e.g. ethics, Christology); hermeneutical methods (e.g. social scientific interpretation); background (e.g. Graeco-Roman religions). Devotes specific articles to each of the Pauline epistles, to hermeneutics, and to preaching Paul today. Articles conclude with extensive bibliographies.

*Murphy-O'Connor, Jerome. Paul: A Critical Life. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996. 416 pp.

Even as Bruce's Paul the Apostle (described above) presents a portrait based upon a surface reading of the entire NT, accepting Acts as a witness almost on a par with the indisputed epistles, so M. insists on a critical procedure, one that largely dismisses Luke's Paul as hopelessly tendentious and that reads the indisputed epistles through the lense of rhetorical and epistolary criticism, probing how Paul's use of rhetorical strategies of persuasion current in his day and insights into the epistolary genre reveal deeper aspects of his circumstances, thought, and personality. Although the book begins with early life and conversion and concludes with Paul's last years, the bulk of the book is arranged according to the churches Paul addressed, and throughout emphasis is upon the ways in which the letters reveal how Paul's relationship with his churches prompted him to change or modify formulations of his theology. Thus, offers more of a literary history than a full-fledged biography; but such a work has value, for it provides helpful discussion of the dynamic between Paul's pastoral circumstances and the theology presented in his epistles. Indeed, the chapters could serve as a kind of "introduction" to the several letters.

*Ridderbos, Herman. Paul: An Outline of His Theology. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975. 587 pp.

Produced by leading Dutch scholar, writing from a Reformed perspective, which necessarily affects his reading of Paul; yet seeks above all to be fair to the witness of the text. Based upon careful exegesis and presented in constant interaction with history of Pauline scholarship. Center of Paul's message: the eschatological time of salvation has been inaugurated in advent, death, and resurrection of Christ. Similar in some respects to Beker (described above), but significantly broader. One reason for difference is that R. accepts Pauline authorship of all canonical epistles attributed to him, including the Pastorals. This center of Paul's theology set forth by R. is not as sharp or focused as Beker's, but is also not as narrow, and thus arguable better able to account for vast range of Paul's theological interests. Arranges volume according to theological topics, beginning with sin and concluding with doctrine of the future. One might learn more about center (and coherence) of Paul's theology from Beker, but more regarding its specific aspects from R..

*Sanders, E. P. Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977. 627 pp.

It is obvious that Paul typically articulates his faith in relation to Judaism, and thus an understanding of Judaism and of Paul's relation to it is essential for interpretation of Paul's thought. S., himself a leading authority on Palestinian Judaism, has produced here a watershed study that has revolutionized scholarly discussion on Paul's theology. His familiar assertion is that Judaism was characterized by "covenantal nomism": "one's place in God's plan is established on the basis of the covenant and the covenant requires as proper response obedience to its commandments," i.e., one enters covenant relationship by grace, but maintains eschatology," "one participates in salvation by becoming one person with Christ, dying with him and sharing the promise of his resurrection." Thus, Paul has much in common with covenantal nomism, but his christology in the overall pattern of his faith marks differences from it. Paul's critique of Judaism did not involve accusation of legalistic righteousness that repudiated grace, but rather stemmed from his insistence that salvation is in Christ, and in nothing else.

*Witherington, III, Ben. The Paul Quest: The Renewed Search for the Jew of Tarsus. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998. 347 pp.

Clearly written introduction to the major issues in contemporary Pauline research and the various ways scholars are addressing these issues. In the process W. evaluates these scholarly options and offers his own arguments and conclusions. Attempts to integrate careful and critical examination of the biblical and historical evidence with valid perspectives of each scholar discussed so as to arrive at a balanced and compelling portrait of Paul and of his thought. In terms of emphasis, stresses the Jewish background of Paul. In terms of method, considers evidence from Acts to be fully reliable and develops the relationship between the chronology of Paul derived from Acts and from the epistles.

Ashton, John. The Religion of Paul the Apostle. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 200. 261 pp.

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Barrett, C. K. Essays on Paul. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982. 170 pp.

_____. From First Adam to Last: A Fresh Approach to Some Problems of Paul and the New Testament. New York: Scribner's, 1962. 124 pp.

_____. Paul: An Introduction of His Thought. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994. 180 pp.

Bassler, Jouette M., ed. Pauline Theology, Volume I: Thessalonians, Philippians, Galatians, Philemon. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991. 287 pp.

Becker, Jürgen. Paul: Apostle to the Gentiles. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993. 513 pp.

Bornkamm, Günther. Paul. New York: Harper & Row, 1971. 260pp.

Davies, W. D. Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology. London: SPCK, 1948. 376 pp.

Donfried, Karl P., and Marshall, I. Howard. The Theology of the Shorter Pauline Letters. New Testament Theology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. 208 pp.

Fee, Gordon D. God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994. 967 pp.

Hübner, Hans. Law in Paul's Thought. Studies of the New Testament and its World. Edinburgh: T. & T Clark. 1982. 186 pp.

Jewett, Robert. Paul the Apostle to America: Current Trends and Pauline Scholarship. Louisville: Westminster/ John Knox, 1994. 178 pp.

Johnson, E. Elizabeth, and Hay, David M. eds. Pauline Theology, Volume IV: Looking Back, Pressing On. Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series, no. 4. Atlanta: Scholars, 1997. 222 pp.

Koperski, Veronica. What are they saying about Paul and the Law?. New York: Paulist, 2001. 148 pp.

Matera, Frank J. Strategies for Preaching Paul. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2001. 186 pp.

Meeks, Wayne. The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983. 299 pp.

Munck, Johannes. Paul and the Salvation of Mankind. Atlanta: John Knox, 1959. 351 pp.

Neyrey, Jerome. Paul, In Other Words: A Cultural Reading of His Letters. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1990. 263 pp.

Plevnik, Joseph. What are they saying about Paul?. New York: Paulist, 1986. 114 pp.

Räsänen, Heikki. Paul & the Law. Rev. ed. Tübingen: Mohr, 1987. 320 pp.

Seifrid, Mark A., and Tan, Randall K.J. The Pauline Writings. IBR Bibliographies, No. 9. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002.

Stewart, James S. A Man in Christ: The Vital Elements of St. Paul's Religion. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975. 331 pp.

Thielman, Frank. Paul & the Law: A Contextual Approach. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1994. 336 pp.

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Wright, N.T. The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993. 316 pp.

GALATIANS

Betz, Hans Dieter. Galatians. Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979. 352 pp.

Groundbreaking commentary on Galatians insofar as it introduced significance of Graeco-Roman rhetoric and epistolography (i.e., study of function, structure, and forms of ancient epistles) into interpretation of Galatians. Argues that this book is an example of an apologetic letter ("forensic rhetoric"), and interprets the letter in light of that convention. Chief contribution of this volume is careful tracing of the argument of the letter, understanding the letter primarily on the basis of its own internal dynamics and the historical situation that occasioned it. Possible weakness is tendency to impose this concept of forensic rhetoric upon entire letter; many have argued that it is plausible for chs. 1-1, but less persuasive for remainder of the letter.

*Longnecker, Richard N. Galatians. Dallas: Word, 1990. 323 pp.

Introduction offers most detailed discussion of history of investigation into key critical issues of destination and relation of Galatians to Acts 11 and 15, but also explores problems Paul faced in Galatian churches, message of the opponents, and impact of this letter upon subsequent Christian thought and activity. Emphasizes materially relation between doctrine of justification by faith and vitality of Christian life empowered by God's Spirit. Stresses methodologically Paul's employment of Hellenistic epistolary conventions, Graeco-Roman rhetoric, and Jewish exegetical practices. Makes selective and eclectic use of recent approaches, esp. epistolography (ancient letters in antiquity) and rhetorical analysis. Comments include detailed and technical sections synthesize main theological issues and at points offer brief suggestions for contemporary relevance.

*Martyn, L. Louis. Galatians. Anchor Bible. New York: Doubleday, 1997. 614 pp.

Emphasizes the relationship between Paul and the Galatians that stands behind this letter. Thus, explores roles played by Paul, Galatians, and opponents ("the Teachers"). Seeks to gain entrance into Paul's intentions by examining the understanding and reception of the letter by various segments of the Galatian church. Encourages interpreters to place themselves in position of original Galatian readers who had one ear tuned to Paul's instructions here and the other to the sermons of the Teachers. In this way M. hopes to arrive at a scientific (i.e., historically accurate) and empathetic interpretation. Maintains that lack of attention to these dynamics have led some scholars to ascribe to Paul's views that actually belonged to his opponents. This employment of historical imagination is innovative and illuminating, though somewhat speculative at points. Structures commentary according to series of "comments," which are extended discussions of most significant historical and theological issues in each passage, set within framework of "notes," i.e., brief, basic explanation of each verse.

Witherington III, Ben. Grace in Galatia: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Galatians. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998. 475 pp.

As with the commentary by Betz (described above), this volume gives serious attention to the flow of the argument, Paul's rhetorical devices, and the rhetorical macrostructuring of the book. In contrast to Betz, W. identifies Galatians as "deliberative discourse" rather than "forensic" or "apologetic." Paul is not primarily concerned to defend himself or his apostolic authority, but offers robust explication of the gospel and its implications. This volume is of course more current than is Betz's commentary, including insights from discoveries and scholarly discussions over the past quarter century. Hence there is significant concern for sociological background, and area that was just emerging in the 1970s. But all this rhetorical and historical discussion is in service of the theological message of the book and its meaning for today. W. concludes each chapter by drawing out significance for contemporary Christians.

Barclay, John M.G. Obedying the Truth: Paul's Ethics in Galatians. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991. 298 pp.

Barrett, C.K. Freedom and Obligation: A Study of the Epistle to the Galatians. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985. 120 pp.

Bruce, F.F. The Epistle to the Galatians: A Commentary on the Greek Text. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982. 305 pp.

Burton, Ernest De Witt. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians. International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh: T.& T. Clark, 1921. 541 pp.

Cousar, Charles B. Galatians. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. Atlanta: John Knox, 1982. 158 pp.

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University Press, 1993. 161 pp.

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Hays, Richard B. The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11. 2nd ed. The Biblical Resource Series. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.

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Morris, Leon. Galatians: Paul's Charter of Christian Freedom. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996. 191 pp.

Ridderbos, Herman. The Epistle of Paul to the Churches of Galatia. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953. 238 pp.

Smiles, Vincent M. The Gospel and the Law in Galatia: Paul's Response to Jewish-Christian Separation and the Threat of Galatian Apostasy. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1998.

EPHESIANS AND COLOSSIANS (See also under Philippians and Philemon)

*Barth, Markus. Ephesians. 2 vols. Anchor Bible. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1974. 849 pp.

Virtually all scholars agree that this is probably the best commentary on Ephesians ever produced, notable esp. for its breadth of learning, meticulous attention to detail, careful citation of evidence, fair and balanced presentation, and theological depth. B. (son of theologian Karl Barth) maintains (contrary to the majority of contemporary critical scholars) that the letter was written by Paul to Gentile Christians living in Ephesus. The "notes" provide brief explanation of the sense of each verse, based primarily upon detailed examination of the Greek, historical background (both Jewish and Graeco-Roman), and canonical connections (esp. with Paul's letters). The "comments" are extended and penetrating discussions on the most significant issues in each passage, focusing upon the contribution of the passage to the presentation of the theme in the NT as a whole, relationship to theological systems and the writings of theological thinkers in the history of the Church, and significance for contemporary Christians.

*Barth, Markus, and Blanke, Helmut. Colossians. Anchor Bible. NY: Doubleday, 1994. 557 pp.

Begun by Markus Barth, and during his failing health completed by his student Helmut Blanke. In spite of this dual authorship, there are no evident seams, but volume flows evenly and coheres perfectly. Introduction contains extensive discussion of the nature of the Colossian "heresy," the relationship between Colossians and Ephesians, and the authorship of Colossians. Contend that this letter was written by Paul from Roman imprisonment around 60-61 to readers in acute danger of being led away by a group largely outside the church touting a religion that involved a synthesis of Jewish and pagan elements and that offered a remarkably complete, coherent, and therefore compelling system. Paul seeks to persuade readers of ultimacy and absolute sufficiency of Christ and of the necessity to embrace a pattern of behavior that stems from affirmation of this ultimacy of Christ. Brief but specific notes explain sense of each passage, with comments that expand upon significant issues in each passage; these comments are eloquent even to the point of poetic, and offer rich theological insight and connections with historical and systematic theology.

*Best, Ernest. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians. International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998. 686 pp.

Solid, detailed, if not overly imaginative, commentary. Introduction includes lengthy discussion of authorship, with the conclusion that Ephesians and Colossians were written by two separate representatives of a Pauline school; Ephesians was produced around 90, a general letter addressed to churches throughout Asia Minor. Treats each passage by offering select bibliography; general introduction with description of passage's structure, genre, and relation to the book as a whole; and comments emphasizing linguistic analysis of the Greek, but with some attention to historical background and canonical connections, all with a view toward clarification of the theological claims of the text.

Lightfoot, J. B. Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon. 6th ed. London: Macmillan, 1882. 430 pp.

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L. was one of the “Cambridge triumvirate,” along with B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, who argued for the authenticity and early dating of NT documents over against the more radical positions of the “Tübingen school.” All of L.’s commentaries are erudite and penetrating, but none has so influenced the history of interpretation as his commentary on Colossians. His analysis of the Colossian “heresy” is classic, and although his contention that the heresy arose out of the Essenes is generally rejected, his basic approach and many of his specific observations form the basis for all subsequent discussion. The Greek text appears at the top of the page, with notes on the Greek below. Comments emphasize linguistic analysis of the Greek, contextual connections, ancient parallels, and history of interpretation (with quotes in the original Greek or Latin). Attends seriously to theological significance. In spite of its age remains extremely helpful.

*Lincoln, Andrew T. Ephesians. Word Biblical Commentary. Dallas: Word, 1990. 494 pp.

This evangelical scholar presents a comparison of Ephesians with Colossians and other books in the Pauline corpus, concluding that Ephesians was written by a follower of Paul after the latter’s death to a group of churches in Asia Minor. The author of Ephesians has redacted his source Colossians and other letters in the Pauline corpus so as to apply the Pauline themes to the situation now facing his readers. Thus, gives attention to the ways in which this redactional process illumines the meaning of each passage, and examines also the lexical and syntactical significance of the Greek text, the employment of rhetorical strategies current at the time of writing, the structure of the passage, and the role of the passage in broader-book context. The purpose of the letter is to persuade readers to consider the role of the Church in the history of God’s purposes, which includes the people of Israel; to embrace their Christian identity in a hostile socio-religious environment; and to recognize the ways in which this identity must be manifested in their behavior. Offers a more complete, coherent, and compelling portrait of the setting of this letter and of the letter’s response to this situation than does Best. Explanation sections synthesize theology of each passage, but seldom address contemporary application.

*O’Brien, Peter T. Colossians, Philemon. Word Biblical Commentary. Waco, TX: Word, 1982. 328 pp.

Introduction provides (among other things) illuminating history of interpretation into the Colossian “heresy,” which O. takes to be an admixture of Jewish and pagan elements, emphasizing mysticism and asceticism. To counter this teaching, Paul stresses realized eschatology, i.e., the aspects of salvation that Christians experience in the present, so as to insist that already Christ provides Christians with more than could possibly be offered by this competing religious system. Like Barth/Blanke, contends that the letter was written by Paul during Roman imprisonment. But O.’s interpretation of individual passages often differs from Barth/Blanke, and in some cases he offers a more compelling interpretation. Emphasizes analysis of the Greek, religious and socio-historical background, canonical connections, and history of interpretation. The “explanation” section synthesizes theology of the passage and explores significance for religious experience of original readers, but seldom addresses contemporary application.

Porkoný, Petr. Colossians: A Commentary. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991. 232 pp.

In contrast to other commentaries on this letter annotated here, this volume, written by a significant Protestant Czechoslovakian scholar, argues that Colossians is a pseudonymous letter written by a follower of Paul after the latter’s death. Gives consideration to the theological significance of a pseudonymous canonical book, and concludes that the theological problems are manageable and that the letter “authentically renders apostolic witness.” Reconstructs a plausible historical setting for the letter. Commentary focuses upon literary structure of whole book and of individual passages, and structure of the theological argument. Gives secondary attention to linguistic analysis, historical background, and history of interpretation. Is primarily concerned with theological exposition, and constantly relates theological claims in specific passages in Colossians to broader biblical witness. Gives no explicit attention to contemporary application.

*Schnackenburg, Rudolf. The Epistle to the Ephesians: A Commentary. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991. 356 pp.

Written by leading European Roman Catholic scholar, reflects a Roman Catholic perspective but also the ecumenical commitment of its author who attempts to write for Protestants as well as Catholics. Considers Ephesians to be a post-Pauline pseudepigraphical work, a general letter addressed to a wide geographical area, whose author knew and used Colossians. Sees the focus of the letter to be the Church, and the purpose to persuade Christians in danger of conforming to their pagan environment to embrace decisively Christian commitment and behavior. Attends to structure and form of each passage, its role within the argument of the whole, linguistic analysis of the Greek, canonical connections, and contemporary significance.

Abbott, T. K. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians. International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1897. 315 pp.

Bruce, F. F. The Epistle to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984. 442 pp.

Dahl, Nils Alstrup. Studies in Ephesians: Introductory Questions, Text - & Edition-Critical Issues, Interpretation of Texts and Themes. Edited by David Hellhom, Vemund Blomkvist, and Tord Fornberg. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000. 548 pp.

Dunn, James D. G. The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon: A Commentary on the Greek Text. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 388 pp.

Francis, Fred O., and Meeks, Wayne A., eds. Conflict at Colossae: A Problem in the Interpretation of Early Christianity Illustrated by Selected Modern Studies. Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1975. 22 pp.

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Klein, William W. The Book of Ephesians: An Annotated Bibliography. New York: Garland, 1996. 312 pp.

Lincoln, Andrew T., and Wedderburn, A. J. M. The Theology of the Later Pauline Letters New Testament Theology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. 185 pp.

Lohse, Eduard. Colossians and Philemon. Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971. 233 pp.

MacDonald, Margaret Y. Colossians and Ephesians. Sacra Pagina. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 200. 390 pp.

Martin, Ralph P. Colossians and Philemon. New Century Bible. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974. 174 pp.
_____. Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991. 156 pp.

Mitton, C. Leslie. Ephesians. New Century Bible Commentary. London: Oliphants, 1976. 235 pp.

Moule, C. F. D. The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians and to Philemon. Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957. 169 pp.

O'Brien, Peter T. The Letter to the Ephesians. Pillar New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999. 536 pp.

Robinson, J. Armitage. St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. London: Macmillan, 1922. 314 pp.

Schweizer, Eduard. The Letter to the Colossians: A Commentary. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1982. 319 pp.

Thurston, Bonnie. Reading Colossians, Ephesians, and 2 Thessalonians: A Literary and Theological Commentary. New York: Crossroad, 1995. 197 pp.

Wright, N. T. Colossians and Philemon. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986. 192 pp.

PHILIPPIANS AND PHILEMON (See also under Ephesians and Colossians)

*Barth, Markus, and Blanke, Helmut. The Letter to Philemon. Eerdmans Critical Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000. 561 pp.

Probably most comprehensive work on Philemon ever produced. Authors insist that Philemon is significant for its unique insights into the social setting of the NT and its creative and specific application of the central demand of the gospel: brotherly love. Present extensive analysis of those aspects of the ancient world relevant for Philemon, esp. slavery in the time of Paul; present also comparison of references to slavery in Philemon with those in other Pauline letters; and provide verse-by-verse commentary, with special attention to major Pauline theological themes, e.g., love, faith, Christian unity, human responsibility. Survey history of interpretation from antiquity to most recent discussions. More detailed than Fitzmyer, esp. in comments on individual passages, though offer less thorough bibliography than does Fitzmyer. Contains many excuses treating significant historical and theological issues in relation to their role within Philemon, Pauline theology, and biblical thought as a whole.

*Bockmuehl, Markus. The Epistle to the Philippians. Black's New Testament Commentary. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 327 pp.

One of the most methodologically reflective commentaries on Philippians or any other NT book. Considers methodological issues involved in the use of Acts for reconstructing the Philippian situation, concluding that a cautious, critical, but sympathetic employment of Acts is appropriate. Incorporates insights from sociological studies and investigations into ancient rhetoric, but rejects too heavy dependence upon these recent approaches in favor of a more general historical approach that makes use of all relevant evidence for ascertaining intended meaning of the text for its original readers and that in turn leads to theological understanding. Packs a remarkable amount of relevant information and theological insight into small amount of space; B. does so by focusing upon those elements that are central to the agenda of the text and are of greatest concern to modern readers.

*Fee, Gordon D. Paul's Letter to the Philippians. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995. 497 pp.

Comprehensive and detailed commentary on the English text (NIV), but with constant reference to the Greek. Writes primarily for pastors and teachers, but with an eye also to the scholar. Argues for Pauline authorship and literary unity of the letter, which F. takes to have been written

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from Roman imprisonment to a church facing opposition because of its commitment to Christ. Considers Philippians to have material and formal connections with two types of letters familiar to 1st c. readers: friendship, and moral exhortation. Introduction discusses extensively these two types of letters, and commentary draws on literary and philosophical background of friendship and moral exhortation. Text of commentary is accessible to non-specialist, presenting theological meaning of the text, with references to original language, literary structure, background of Paul's thought discerned from his other letters, all discussed more fully, and technically, in extensive footnotes.

*Fitzmyer, Joseph A. The Letter to Philemon. Anchor Bible. New York: Doubleday, 2000. 138 pp.

Deals in an informed and judicious manner with most significant issues in Philemon. The Introduction, which comprises more than half the volume, offers brief but illuminating discussions of slavery in antiquity, contemporary significance of this letter, theology, and complete bibliography. The "comments" on each passage, accessible to the non-specialist, treat literary structure, function within the letter, and basic meaning of the passage. The "notes" explore meaning of each verse through linguistic analysis; social, political, economic, and religious background; and history of interpretation (both ancient and modern). Includes also extensive bibliography on each passage.

*Hawthorne, Gerald. Philippians. Word Biblical Commentary. Waco, TX: Word, 1983. 232 pp.

Solid, informed, though not particularly original, commentary written from evangelical perspective. Argues that Philippians is a unity, written by Paul from Caesarean prison around 60. Comments are lucid and clearly organized, typically listing major interpretive possibilities along with arguments for and against each, concluding with H.'s own considered judgment. Also tends to list major issues or aspects of a passage, developing the meaning of each, with explicit citation of evidence, esp. from structure, linguistic analysis, other Pauline passages, and parallels from Jewish and Graeco-Roman writings. Explicates theological meaning of each passage and its pastoral significance for original readers. Does little to address explicitly contemporary application.

*O'Brien, Peter T. Commentary on Philippians. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991. 597 pp.

Traditional commentary in that it focuses upon historical-critical and linguistic exegesis of the Greek text, and draws little upon the more recent literary, rhetorical, and sociological approaches. O. interacts fully with history of scholarship, but gives primary attention to his own engagement with the text, and is often quite independent in his interpretive judgments. Deals with each passage by exploring its structure, themes (overarching concern and its specific development within the paragraph), function within argument of entire letter, and analysis of every phrase and word of the Greek text. Gives particular attention to background of the city of Philippi, Paul's opponents, and character and function (within the book) of the Christological hymn in 2:5-11. Focus is upon theological meaning of the text, with concern to relate this theology to other biblical passages and to biblical theology as a whole.

*Petersen, Norman R. Rediscovering Paul: Philemon and the Sociology of Paul's Narrative World. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985. 308 pp.

This pioneer in the new literary criticism of the Gospels here integrates contemporary literary and sociological study with the traditional historical-critical approach. Argues that letters have narrative sub-structures (i. e., that they assume and present a story), and that the "narrative world" presented in a letter has the same kinds of social arrangements ("social structures underlying the social relations comprised of the actions of the actors in Paul's letters and their stories") and symbolic forms ("systems of knowledge, belief, and value, that define these actors' identities and motivate their actions") as does the real world. This volume is thus a groundbreaking work both in methodology and in the study of Philemon, arguing that Paul relates the mundane experience of a slave and the dynamics between this slave and his master to the story of the transcendent divine world, in which God is Father, Christ is Lord, and love is ultimate reality. Paul urges the Church to submit this present temporal world to the Kingdom of God, which is already breaking in, and thus to function as "anti-structure," replacing the old order with new order after the image of Christ. This vivid portrait of the Church as manifestation of the new order makes Philemon central to understanding Paul's theology as a whole.

Bakirtzis, Charalambos, and Koester, Helmut, eds. Philippi at the Time of Paul and after His Death. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998. 87 pp.

Beare, Francis Wright. The Epistle to the Philippians. Harper's New Testament Commentaries. New York: Harper & Row, 1959. 182 pp.

Bloomquist, L. Gregory. The Function of Suffering in Philippians. Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series, no. 78. Sheffield: JSOT, 1993. 235 pp.

Caird, George B. Paul's Letters from Prison: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon in the Revised Standard Version. New Clarendon Bible. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976. 223 pp.

Callahan, Allen Dwight. Embassy of Onesimus: The Letter of Paul to Philemon. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997. 96 pp.

Collange, Jean-Francois. The Epistle of Saint Paul to the Philippians. London: Epworth, 1979. 159 pp.

Craddock, Fred. Philippians. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. Atlanta: John Knox, 1985. 84 pp.

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- Eadie, John. A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to the Philippians. 2nd ed. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1884. 296 pp.
- Knox, John. Philemon among the Letters of Paul: A New view of its Place and Importance. 2nd ed. New York: Abingdon, 1959. 110 pp.
- Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians. London: Macmillan, 1913. 350 pp.
- Martin, Ralph. Philippians. 2nd ed. New Century Bible Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987. 187 pp.
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- Vincent, Marvin R. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles to the Philippians and to Philemon. International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1897. 201 pp.
- Witherington III, Ben C. Friendship and Finances in Philippi: The Letter of Paul to the Philippians. The New Testament in Context. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1995. 176 pp.